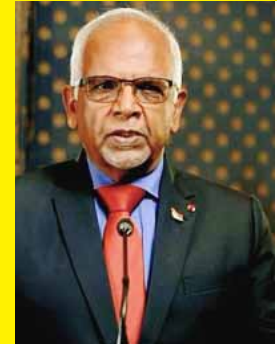


President Dharam Gokhool's End-of-Year Address to the Nation



Mr Dharam Gokhool renewed his pledge to remain close and connected with the Mauritian populace and to spearhead decisive actions on critical issues, with a view to building a more equitable, just, and prosperous future for the Republic and the Nation.

The President recalled the unwavering Governmental efforts to cater for the aspirations and needs of the population, lauding the elaboration of the strategic Vision 2050. He rejoiced that the population is aware that the principles of democracy and freedom are prevailing in the country.

Reviewing the achievements of 2025, he referred to gains in key economic sectors such as global business, finance, Information technology, and tourism, while urging stronger momentum in industry, agro-industry, the blue economy, and the circular economy.

He also outlined looming challenges, namely socio-economic pressures, environmental threats, energy crises, cybercrime, and ageing population, noting that these could be addressed through the unified resilience and solidarity of the population.

Recalling that proximity with the population is a core principle of his presidency, Mr Gokhool indicated that focus was on direct engagement with various segments of society. Some 10,000 persons that include children, students, young adults, senior citizens, non-governmental organisations and persons with disabilities, were welcomed at the State House.

Key projects of the Office of the President aim at promoting equality and inclusion, addressing drug abuse and trafficking, and countering the erosion of social values. A range of activities was also organised to harness technology and innovation for social progress and to buttress Mauritius's visibility on the international stage through strategic cooperation.

The President moreover called upon the population to champion the principles of courage, resilience and optimism to contribute to the progress of the Republic, by adopting a healthy lifestyle for their physical and mental wellbeing. The setting-up of a Health Track at the State House, was thus announced.

"We must remain optimistic about our future. A pessimistic attitude would be fatal for our Republic. Resilience and courage are part of our DNA", said the President in his concluding remarks.

GIS

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ADJOURNED

THE NEXT SITTING IS ON TUESDAY 17 MARCH 2026 AT 11:30

What a long break for Christmas and the New Year! No sooner will they be back in March 2026 that they will break for Easter. When do they really work? Some people ask.

It's good that they break. They shout at one another in the House, they scream, They VITUPERATE. It's bad for their health.

As her predecessor, the Speaker is having a hard time. She begged MP Adrien Duval: Please let me speak! Let me speak!

She admonished him: You do not speak to me in a sitting position. The poor chap stood up for his P.Q. Bérenger screamed at him: Sit down, Sit down, Sit down, calling him names in the process. The Chappie did not know whether to stand up as ordered by the Speaker or to sit down as demanded by the Deputy PM Bérenger.

From Japan, Mylene writes



THIRD IN THE WORLD: Takaichi's Power Recognized by Forbes

In October 2025, Sanae Takaichi shattered the glass ceiling and made headlines by becoming Japan's first female prime minister. She took charge of the world's fourth-largest economy, stepping into office at a time marked by challenges such as inflation and stagnant wages.

Every year, Forbes, a global business media company that publishes Forbes Magazine, uses a scoring system to decide who appears on its World's 100 Most Powerful Women list. This year, Prime Minister Takaichi was ranked third, behind European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen and European Central Bank President Christine Lagarde.

How Does Forbes Compile the List?

Quite simply, Forbes ranks women based on money, influence, media presence and the size of what they control.

Money refers to either an individual's personal wealth or the size of the budget they control. Influence is measured by how many people are affected by their decisions, while media presence reflects the level of global attention they receive through news coverage, interviews and social media. Finally, the size of the organisation or country they lead falls under what Forbes calls their sphere of power.

Thousands of candidates are considered, ranging from politicians and corporate leaders to entrepreneurs and cultural icons. These are then narrowed down to the top 100 based on the scoring system. The list changes each year depending on factors such as elections, company performance and global events.

In Japan, the reaction has been mixed. A very Japanese response has been that the ranking itself matters less than results.

In 2023 Barbie (yes, Barbie the doll) made it onto the list. Forbes explained that Barbie was no longer just a doll, but a symbol of female empowerment and cultural influence. (Oh, pull the other one.)

Including a plastic doll among the world's most powerful women risked trivialising the achievements of those who wield genuine political, economic, and social power. While many people complained about the Barbie hype, myself included, Mattel, Inc. was laughing all the way to the bank.

Regardless of the rankings, Prime Minister Sanae Takaichi's achievement is historic. Becoming Japan's first female prime minister and being recognised as the world's third most powerful woman is truly worthy of congratulations.

Congratulations Prime Minister Takaichi!

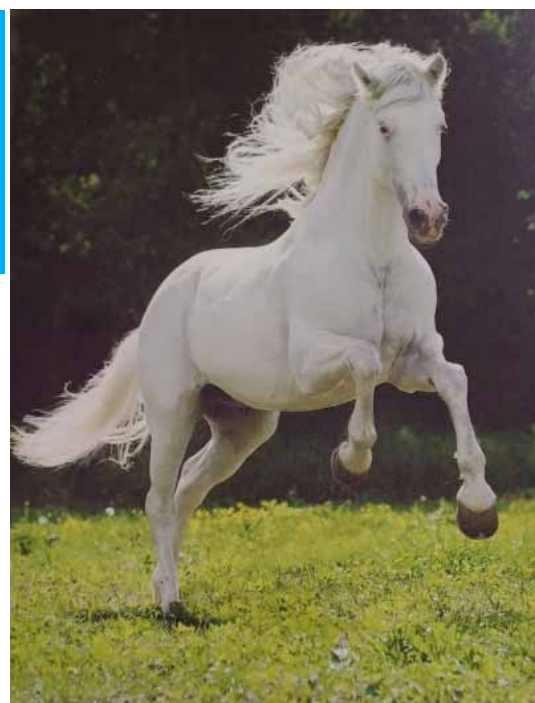
2026 will be Year of The Horse A Focus On The Andalusian Horse

When the Moors from North Africa ruled large parts of Spain from the 8th to 15th century, they didn't arrive empty handed. They brought Barb horses. Tough, fast, and built for battle and epic journeys, these horses meant business.

When they were crossed with the local Iberian horses of southern Spain, magic happened.

That mix was a total game changer and helped create the Andalusian we know and admire today. All strength, stamina, agility and intelligence.

For the Moors, horses weren't just four-legged transport or tools of war. They were symbols of status, culture and artistry. Their style of horsemanship had a lasting influence, especially its



focus on balance and instant responsiveness.

Andalusian horses are not born white. They're usually born black, bay or dark brown and gradually lighten as they age. This process can take several years, and by adulthood many look completely white, even though genetically they're still grey.

So whether you spot one galloping around Spain or, in this case, proudly hanging on the editor's wall (this picture), the Andalusian still carries that Moorish-Barb DNA, a living legacy of the cultural exchange that shaped medieval Spain.

THE ANNUAL MUNHEN MARKET IN SAPPORO

What on earth is Munhen? Fair question.

It's simply the Japanese way of saying Munich, the capital of Bavaria, Germany, and yes, the home of Oktoberfest. Because Japanese doesn't have a 'u' sound, Munich gets a little linguistic makeover and comes out as Munhen. Mystery solved.

Pronunciation quirks aside, every year from November to December, Sapporo, the capital of Hokkaido, hosts the Munich Christmas Market at Odori Park. The event has been running since 2002 and is a festive nod to Sapporo's sister-city relationship with Munich, bringing a small slice of Europe to northern Japan.

Think classic German Christmas stalls, sizzling sausages, soft pretzels, hot wine, chocolatey drinks, and plenty of handmade crafts and decorations.

In short, it's a welcoming European style Christmas right in the middle of Sapporo - no passport needed and no admission fee either.



Handmade decorations



German Stalls



Almond Factory



Gift of Snow symbol



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- .. *RENTING/LEASE SPACE.*
- .. *APARTMENT.*
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